

**Minutes
Tri-County Retreat
State Capitol Building-Room 1126
Thursday, November 14, 2002
9:00 A.M.**

In Attendance:

Lancaster County

Kathy Campbell, Commissioner
Bob Workman, Commissioner
Ray Stevens, Commissioner
Larry Hudkins, Commissioner
Bernie Heier, Commissioner
Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Bruce Medcalf, County Clerk
Patricia Owen, Chief Deputy County Clerk
Gordon Kissel, Lobbyist
Amy Prenda, Lobbyist
Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Director
Deb Schorr, Commissioner-Elect
Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney

Douglas County

Mike Boyle, Commissioner
Clare Duda, Commissioner
Carole Woods Harris, Commissioner
Carol McBride Pirsch, Commissioner
Kathleen Kelly, Chief Administrative Officer
Patrick Bloomingdale, Assistant Administrator
Kristin Lynch, Administrative Specialist
Sherri Larsen, County Clerk's Office
Mike Kelly, Lobbyist

Sarpy County

Inez Boyd, Commissioner
Jack Postlewiatt, Commissioner
Mark Wayne, Chief Administrative Officer
Fred Uhe, Deputy County Clerk/Lobbyist
Tamra Madsen, Deputy County Attorney
Aldona Doyle, Commissioner

Tom Shaw-Omaha World Herald Reporter

(1.) HIPAA UPDATE

Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney gave a brief overview and background on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Staab discussed where Lancaster County stands right now with respect to compliance with HIPAA requirements. Staab stated that a HIPAA Committee had been put together and surveys have now been distributed to Lancaster County agencies to attempt to determine which agencies would be most affected by the new regulations.

Tamra Madsen, Deputy County Attorney for Sarpy County, indicated that Sarpy has completed a preliminary assessment of their agencies and offered to work with Lancaster County.

Patrick Bloomingdale, Assistant Administrator for Douglas County indicated that Douglas County had formed a steering committee and hired a private consultant to help them through this process. He indicated that Douglas County had made good progress toward meeting the April 2003 Privacy Deadline. Bloomingdale stated that he would be serving as the County's designated Privacy Officer and they would also be hiring a designated Security Officer. In response to a question from Commissioner Larry Hudkins, Bloomingdale said they have currently spent approximately \$100,000 for the services of the private consultant, \$100,000 for legal advice and anticipated another \$50,000 for a project manager. Bloomingdale also indicated Douglas County's willingness to work with the other two counties on their programs.

(2). Cost of Criminal Justice System

Commissioner Bob Workman indicated that Lancaster County has been working with a consultant on issues relating to their Criminal Justice System. Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Director, distributed copies of the **Lancaster County Justice System Fiscal Data, FY03 Budget Comparison with FY02.** (Exhibit One)

Kathleen Kelly, Douglas County Chief Administrative Officer, stated that Douglas County's Justice System comprised 54% of their budget or \$11,000,000. She indicated that length of stay was a contributing factor in those costs, with state wards averaging a 49 day stay. Kelly remarked that 72 of the 144 incarcerated were state wards. Kelly further stated that Douglas County's current per diem rate was \$123.00. Kelly stated that the potential \$4,000,000 price tag for out-of-home treatment and rehabilitation for juveniles was double that for the previous year. Douglas County spent \$2.2 million on juvenile costs last year Kelley said.

Workman stated that Lancaster County's juvenile program seemed under control for the time being with the construction of the new Juvenile Detention Facility. Kerry Eagan, Lancaster County Chief Administrative Officer, indicated that Families First and Foremost (F3) has had a significant effect in program cost reductions through their array of services for youth. He indicated that the use of 'in-house' assessments, rather than utilizing Geneva or Kearney, had lowered total costs and turn around time.

Mark Wayne, Sarpy County Administrator, commented that Sarpy County had also constructed a new staff secure, 36-bed juvenile justice center and would hopefully be open by January 2003. He indicated that Sarpy also would have an assessment center available. General discussion was held by the three counties regarding the assessment process and the location of court rooms.

(3). Legislative Agenda

Kerry Eagan, distributed the document, **Lancaster County Legislative Proposals 2003 Legislative Session**, (Exhibit Two) and highlighted legislative issues that Lancaster County considered priority issues. Discussion was held on the timing of Post Commitment Patients held at the Crisis Center legislation as well as Juvenile Justice, Inheritance Tax, Transfer of the District Court Clerk to the State and Building Permits for Residences on Farmsteads proposed legislation. Eagan further discussed the interest of Lancaster County in researching the issue of salary comparability versus ability to pay for counties. Eagan briefly reviewed the current Visitors Promotion Committee (VPC) legislation and indicated that Lancaster County would like to see the legislation allow for three representatives of the hotel industry to sit on the committee. Kathleen Kelly, Douglas County Chief Administrative Officer, indicated that they currently have three hotels on their committee as a result of a Douglas County Attorney's opinion that current legislation allows for this. Sarpy County indicated that they only have two at the present time. Sarpy County indicated that they may not be comfortable with the legislation mandating three hotel representatives, but would rather see legislation that allows for the third representative if the county desires.

Kelly, indicated that Douglas County's legislative focus this next session would be more defensive than offensive. She indicated that they will monitor legislation and attempt to protect funding for existing programs and to watch for cost-shifts.

Fred Uhe, Sarpy County Deputy County Clerk/Lobbyist, indicated that Sarpy County would also be taking a defensive stance in the next session. Uhe touched on some draft legislation relating to the County Purchasing Act. Uhe also indicated that issues such as prisoner reimbursement and false alarm fee enabling legislation would be of interest to them.

Discussion was held by the three counties on the issue of a proposed \$0.02 increase in the current gas tax, sponsored by the City of Lincoln.

In response to a question from Kathleen Kelly, Dave Kroeker went through the budget development and hearing process for Lancaster County. Workman indicated that this may be a good agenda item for the next Tri-County meeting.

Gordon Kissel, Lancaster County Lobbyist briefly discussed the Medicaid and Medicare task force, the structure of the current mental health regions, the proposed extension of the new state sales tax and commented that he felt the current Special Session would likely bleed over into the regular session to start in January. Kissel also felt that LB775 will be looked at again in the next session as budget issues are addressed.

With no further items on the agenda the Tri-County meeting was adjourned.



Bruce Medcalf
Lancaster County Clerk

